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Amendments to the Drawings

The attached sheet of drawings includes new Fig. 9A.

Attachment: Replacement Sheet

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REMARKS

Claims 56-63 are currently pending, claims 22-55 having being cancelled without prejudice by this amendment.

Drawing Objection

The Examiner objected to the drawings for failing to show the rotary mechanism of claims 41-43. Applicants have cancelled claims 41-43 herein. However, new claims 58 and 63 recite a rotary mechanism. Accordingly, Applicants have added new FIG. 9A (attached as a replacement sheet) which illustrates such a rotary mechanism. The specification has been amended to include reference numerals 200-204. No new matter has been added.

35 U.S.C. 112 Rejection

The Examiner rejected claims 41-43 for failing to satisfy the written description requirement of 35 U.S.C. 112, first paragraph. Applicants have cancelled claims 41-43 herein which relate to a curved path. However, new claims 58 and 63 recite a rotary mechanism, and new claim 60 recites rotating a wafer cassette. Applicants respectfully submit that both features are clearly described and explained in Applicants' Specification (see above-amended portion of Applicants' Specification).

The Examiner rejected claims 22 and 39 under 35 U.S.C. 112, first paragraph. As stated, Applicants have cancelled claims 22 and 39.

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Prior Art Rejections

The Examiner rejected claims 22-55 under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) and/or 103(a) based on U.S. Patent No. 6,579,052 (Bonora et al.) alone or in combination with WO 98/46503 (Fosnight). As stated, Applicants have cancelled claims 22-55, and have added new claims 56-63. Neither Bonora et al. nor Fosnight, alone or in combination, appear to disclose the features of new claims 56-63. For example, neither Bonora et al. nor Fosnight, alone or in combination, appear to disclose:

an interstation cassette mover adapted to transport a cassette between processing stations, the interstation cassette mover comprising:

a first wafer cassette support and transport mechanism adapted to allow wafer cassettes to be delivered to and retrieved from at least the first processing station;

a second wafer cassette support and transport mechanism adapted to allow wafer cassettes to be delivered to and retrieved from at least the second processing station; and

a handoff mechanism adapted to transfer a wafer cassette between the first and second wafer cassette support and transport mechanisms.

or:

delivering a cassette from the first processing station to a first wafer cassette support and transport mechanism of the interstation cassette mover;

moving the cassette from the first wafer cassette support and transport mechanism to a second wafer cassette support and transport mechanism of the interstation cassette mover; and

delivering the wafer cassette to the second processing station.

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Accordingly, new claims 56-63 are submitted as allowable, and allowance of the same is respectfully requested.

A separate Request for Extension of Time is transmitted herewith, with authorization to charge deposit account No. 04-1696 the requisite extension fee. Applicants do not believe any other fees are due regarding this amendment. If any additional fees are required, however, please charge Deposit Account No. 04-1696. Applicants encourage the Examiner to telephone Applicants' attorney to discuss the amendment should any issues remain.

Respectfully submitted,



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